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ANNUAL REPORT

CONFEDERATE RELIC ROOM

1979 — 80

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State Budget and Control Board

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**CONFEDERATE
RELIC ROOM**

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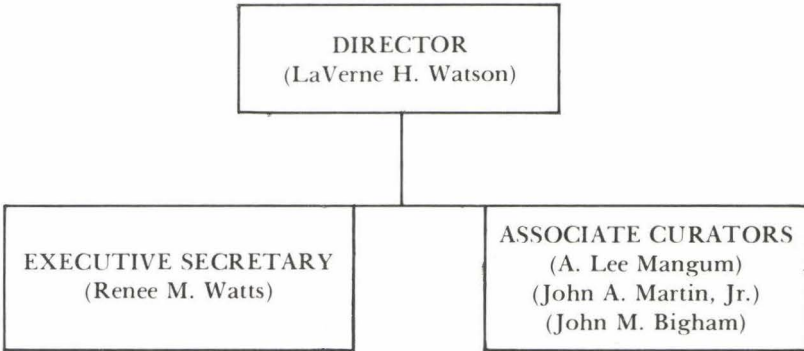


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**CONFEDERATE RELIC ROOM
ACCREDITED BY
THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF MUSEUMS**



DIRECTOR

The director is responsible for the entire operation of the museum. In addition to supervising the every day operations, she is responsible for locating and acquiring gifts; keeping abreast of the latest methods of preservation and display, and identifying objects for the public; preparation of the budget request, five year plan and annual report.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

The secretary is responsible for office management including secretarial work, personnel records, answering the telephone and screening calls; proper accounting and expenditures of all monies; assisting in the preparation of the budget, the five year plan, the annual report, all state reports.

ASSOCIATE CURATORS

The curators are responsible for scheduling and conducting tours and meetings; giving information to visitors; inventory of artifacts; performing research; acquiring and accessioning gifts; preservation, which includes periodically cleaning firearms and swords and conditioning leathers; the restoration of fabrics; exhibits, which includes making costumes, fabricating, designing and changing displays, composing narrative, labelling and sign making; keeping the museum area clean and attractive; carpentry.

HISTORY OF THE AGENCY

This collection was started in 1895 by the Wade Hampton Chapter United Daughters of the Confederacy. In 1901 the Legislature provided a room in the State House to house the artifacts and in 1902 appropriated monies for its maintenance.

Throughout the years, items of historical value have been collected and preserved from all periods of South Carolina history. Previously no funds had been provided for purchases. For the first time since this collection was started, funds were provided in the 1977-78 budget for purchase of artifacts, which were limited to Black and Indian articles. And as time marches on, the current market values steadily increase.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MUSEUM

Our function is to provide museum services. We collect, preserve and display items of historical value from all periods of South Carolina history. Additional functions include research; aiding other museums upon request; organizing and conducting tours; supplying information to visitors and the public; indentifying objects; supplying speakers for schools, civic groups and homes for the elderly; making the museum available for meetings of historical and civic groups. Primarily we are an educational institution and education is the justification for what we do. Our services are for the benefit of our people.

We have received Accreditation from the American Association of Museums. This demonstrates we operate on a professional level in accordance with standards of excellence prescribed by the American Association of Museums.

The director serves as the Small Museums Representative of the Southeastern Museums Conference, and organized and conducted a panel at the annual meeting in Jackson, Mississippi, last October. She holds one of two state chairmanships assigned to South Carolina by the American Association for State and Local History. She is a member of Central Midlands Regional Planning Council for Historic Preservation and the South Carolina Federation of Museums. She was appointed a Reader for the Institute of Museum Services, US department of Education, in the Grants Program.

We hold memberships in and attend meetings of the American Association of Museums, Southeastern Federation of Museums, South Carolina Federation of Museums and American Association

for State and Local History in order to keep abreast of the status quo in the museum profession.

COLLECTIONS

Historical Artifacts

These are a primary concern. We attempt to acquire as many South Carolina items of historical value as possible, lest they be lost to us. Too frequently our relics appear in antique shops, many drift out of State. By attending museum and historical meetings, we have cultivated and maintained good contacts and are able to form new ones. Many of our gifts come from out of state, although the roots were in South Carolina. Each acquisition must be accessioned, cataloged, inventoried in a cross reference file, then placed in storage.

Our more interesting acquisitions include a Palmetto Musket, Palmetto Pistol and a Palmetto Sabre—all made in Columbia and commissioned by the State of South Carolina in 1852; an 1880 quilt sewn on a backing of hand written letters and receipts; one Women's Army Air Corps uniform, WWII; the first POW bracelet, inscribed Jas. B. Stockdale; leather flight jacket WWII; a medal commissioned by Greenville County for presentation to her sons in WWI; a gas mask with carrying case WWI; two black silk judge's robes; a 1905 Corona typewriter, one of the first portable models; military decorations of Dr. Francis W. Bradley.

Preservation

It is necessary to keep abreast of the latest techniques in preservation. Often extensive sewing is necessary in affording proper care to fabrics, including clothing, flags, etc. Swords and firearms must be cleaned and oiled semi-annually. Woods and leathers must be treated periodically. If we know not how to preserve our heirlooms, then we would be wasting our time in collecting them.

Display

We have the responsibility of telling the South Carolina story through a museum which is attractive, informative and appealing. Our visitors must be impressed by what they see and learn. Display cases must be kept clean and refabricated (covered in cloth) periodically. Touch-up painting is necessary. Props for displays must be constructed. The narrative must be composed for each case, then signs made. All of the above work is performed by the staff.

The newly acquired upper gallery was opened in February. In the exhibits we pay tribute to South Carolinians in the military, both past and present. Thus our emphasis during the past year was geared to acquiring the necessary uniforms. We have been fortunate in obtaining mens' uniforms. We continue to seek uniforms of South Carolina women in service. Additional exhibit cases will be purchased as funds become available.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Primarily we are an educational institution. Tours, including a background on South Carolina history, were given to 30,000 school children. Letters were sent to teachers throughout the State urging them to bring their classes to Columbia. All day tours were arranged for many teachers including visits to the State House and museums in the Columbia area.

We assisted legislators, authors, graduate assistants, the press and the public in their research.

Identifying objects for the public is time consuming and the number of requests increase each year. If we are unable to identify an artifact, we refer the visitor to the proper authority.

We assist other museums upon request.

FINANCES

During the year 62% of our budget was earmarked for personal service, with 38% for operating expenses. As pointed out in G. Ellis Burcaw's *Introduction to Museum Work*, published by the American Association for State and Local History, "a healthy situation is that two thirds of the annual operating budget should be devoted to salaries. Even 75% may not be excessive under some circumstances." So according to American Association for State and Local History standards, our salary ratio is below par.

We have five employees. Personal Service funds allocated amounted to \$66,471 and Operating Expenses \$41,521, thus making the total budgeted \$107,992.

A financial inventory, of the more valuable artifacts, is on file at General Services for insurance purposes. The value of the collection far exceeded monies appropriated by the State during the life of the

museum. Therefore, the collection of gifts has made money for the State rather than having cost the State.

VISITORS

Our 72,000 visitors have come from 47 states and the District of Columbia and 20 foreign countries, representing every continent. We have experienced a 10% drop in the number of visitors during the past year. This is typical of museums throughout the country, with some reporting as high as a 25% decrease. This has been attributed to the economy.

1979 — 80 STATISTICAL DATA

Visitors	72,000
States & D.C. represented by visitors	47
Foreign countries represented by visitors	20
Lectures to groups	456
People present at lectures	30,747
Telephone inquiries	5,300
Inquires by correspondence & visitors	4,200
Hours of research	409
Books acquired	11
Historical pictures acquired	3
Meetings and tours after regular hours	5
Meetings during regular hours	4
Hours indentifying objects for the public	34
Inventory — hours spent	326
Exhibits changed	35
Firearms & swords cleaned	62
Hours spent on exhibit preparation	830
Museum affiliated meetings attended	22
Objects brought in for identification	31
Conservation — hours	203
Radio Tapings	1

LaVerne H. Watson
Director

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